



Grant County Health Department
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COMMUNITY EDITION

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Preventing Birth Defects

Birth defects are abnormal conditions that happen before or at the time of birth. Some are mild—like an extra finger or toe. Some are very serious—like a heart defect. They can cause physical, mental, or medical problems. Some are caused by genetic factors. Others are caused by certain drugs, medicines or chemicals. But the causes of most birth defects are still a mystery.

How Serious are Birth Defects?

- About 120,000 babies in the U.S. each year have birth defects.
- Birth defects are the leading cause of death in children less than one year of age—causing one in every five deaths.
- 18 babies die each day in the U.S. as a result of a birth defect.

Not all birth defects can be prevented. The good news is that new ways of preventing and treating birth defects are being found.

A woman can increase her own chance of having a healthy baby by following the steps below:

- Take a vitamin with 400 micrograms (mcg) folic acid every day
- Do not use alcohol, tobacco, or street drugs.
- Wash hands often with soap and water to prevent infections.
- Talk with the health care professional about any medical problems and medicine use (both prescription and over-the-counter).
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Avoid unpasteurized (raw) milk and foods made from it.
- Avoid eating raw or under cooked meat.
- Get early prenatal care and go to every appointment.
- Avoid any substances at work or at home that might be harmful to a developing baby

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 1-800-232-4636 or visit their website:
www.cdc.gov/pregnancy or March of Dimes www.marchofdimes.com



The mission of the Grant County Health Department is to promote the health and wellness of ALL residents of Grant County.

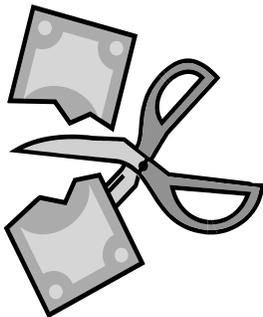
Websites

- ▶ Visit the Grant County website at www.co.grant.wi.gov for more information on Grant County services.
- ▶ Visit the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR) website www.dhswir.org for information on your immunizations.
- ▶ Visit www.grantcountyhospice.com for information on the Hospice Program.
- ▶ Visit www.safegrantcounty.org for information on the S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition.

Making a Realistic Food Budget

Many households can spend less for food each month if they plan their meals and make good choices at the grocery store. You can make a budget by following these steps:

1. Track the money you spend in a month on food at the grocery store. Subtract all non-food items such as soaps, pet foods, paper products, cigarettes, etc. from total spent.



2. Track the money spent that same month on all food eaten away from home. This would include restaurants and fast food, senior dining site donations, etc.

Grocery store - non-food + eating out = total food budget

3. Based on your past month's food purchases and expenses, create a monthly food budget that meets your needs and wants. Include a way to put some money aside for unexpected food costs and events. Your food budget should then meet your monthly food needs.
4. Continue to track your food expenses each month to track what you are actually spending. Adjust plan as necessary.

Source: *Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program booklets*

For more information on eating healthy at home, visit www.choosemyplate.gov or <http://fyi.uwex.edu/foodsense/> or contact the Grant County UW-Extension Office, 723-2125.

UW
EXTENSION

WIC & Health Check Clinics

(Immunizations given at all these clinics)

Feb 3rd—Late Muscoda Kratochwill Bldg from 2:00pm to 6:30pm

Feb 4th—Platteville Lutheran Church of Peace from 9:00am to 3:30pm

Feb 9th—Boscobel United Methodist Church from 9:30am to 3:30pm

Feb 10th—Fennimore United Methodist Church from 9:00am to 3:30pm

Feb 16th—Cuba City St Rose—Mazzuchelli Hall from 9:30am to 3:30pm

Feb 18th—Late Platteville Lutheran Church of Peace from 3:00pm to 6:30pm

Feb 23rd—Lancaster Schreiner Memorial Library from 9:00am to 3:30pm

Feb 25th—Platteville Lutheran Church of Peace from 9:00am to 3:30pm

Weather Cancellations

If the weather or road conditions are bad, the Grant County Health Department may decide to cancel immunization, WIC or other clinics.

One way to find out is to listen to the radio. The local stations used by the Health Department are

WGLR 97.7 FM or 1280 AM
WPVL 107.1 FM or 1590 AM
WRCO 100.9 FM

In general, we will cancel a WIC clinic if the school in that town cancels school for the day. We will have the clinic if school is delayed. If in doubt, you can call the Grant County Health Department at 723-6416.

Facts about Folic Acid

CDC urges women to take 400 mcg of folic acid every day, starting at least one month before getting pregnant, to help prevent major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine.



About folic acid

Folic acid is a B vitamin. Our bodies use it to make new cells. Everyone needs folic acid.

Why folic acid is so important

Folic acid is very important because it can help prevent some major birth defects of the baby's brain and spine (anencephaly) and spina bifida.

How much folic acid a woman needs

400 micrograms (mcg) every day.

When to start taking folic acid

For folic acid to help prevent some major birth defects, a woman needs to start taking it at least one month before she becomes pregnant and while she is pregnant.

Every woman needs folic acid every day, whether she's planning to get pregnant or not, for the healthy new cells the body makes daily. Think about the skin, hair, and nails. These – and other parts of the body – make new cells each day.

How a woman can get enough folic acid

There are two easy ways to be sure to get enough folic acid each day:

1. Take a vitamin that has folic acid in it every day.
 - Most multivitamins sold in the United States have the amount of folic acid women need each day. Women can also choose to take a small pill (supplement) that has only folic acid in it each day.
 - Multivitamins and folic acid pills can be found at most local pharmacy, grocery, or discount stores. Check the label to be sure it contains 100% of the daily value (DV) of folic acid, which is 400 micrograms (mcg).
2. Eat a bowl of breakfast cereal that has 100% of the daily value of folic acid (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/cereals.html>) every day.
 - Not every cereal has this amount. Check the label on the side of the box, and look for one that has "100%" next to folic acid.



Protect Yourself from the Dangers of Radon

January Is National Radon Action Month

January is National Radon Action Month, and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and federal health officials note that exposure to this colorless, odorless, radioactive gas is the nation's second leading cause of lung cancer and the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Radon is naturally present in the ground and can enter buildings through their foundations. Both old and newer homes can be susceptible to radon.

"Research shows that radon causes more lung cancer among non-smokers than even second-hand tobacco smoke," said Dr. Henry Anderson, Chief Medical Officer and State Epidemiologist. "Fortunately, this cause of lung cancer is largely preventable; the first step is to test your home. If elevated radon is found, it can be easily and effectively corrected," Anderson said. Radon concentrations in air can be measured with simple, inexpensive test kits available from hardware stores and local public health agencies. State statistics indicate that between 5 and 10 percent of homes in Wisconsin have elevated airborne concentrations of radon in significantly occupied spaces. "Radon concentrations vary greatly from home to home, so any home, no matter its age, should be tested," Anderson said.

More than 80 radon mitigation contractors in Wisconsin are nationally certified and install highly effective soil-depressurization radon control systems. Thousands of systems are installed in existing homes in Wisconsin each year. New construction should include features to reduce radon entry recommended by the standards for green building from the National Association of Home Builders.

You can find more information about radon on the DHS website at <http://www.lowradon.org>. Also, experts in local public health agencies can be reached toll-free statewide by dialing 1-888 LOW-RADON (1-888-569-7236). Free radon test kits can be picked up at the Grant County Health Dept as supply lasts.



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